

Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee

May 15, 2007 Meeting Summary

Attendees: Bill Frick, Debbie Brown, Delegate Bill Bronrott, Erwin Mack, Lt. Ron Smith, Fred Lees, Deborah Snead, Jerry Donaldson, Ben Stutz for Councilmember Ervin. Staff: Matt Greene, Pedestrian Safety Coordinator; Blanca Kling, Montgomery County Police; Brenda Botchway, Injury Prevention Coordinator, Montgomery County DHHS; Julie Maione, Montgomery County Highway Safety Office. Guests: John Wetmore, TV show - Perils for Pedestrians; Richard Hoyer, Councilmember Trachtenberg's office; George Sauer; Joan Patterson; Honorable Maurice Trebach, Chair, Friendship Heights Village Council; Robert Schwarzbart, Friendship Heights Village Council.

Agenda items:

1. Welcome.
2. Future education / enforcement efforts.
3. Next Dialogue – Germantown Recreation Center, evening of Monday, June 18
4. Safe Speed automated enforcement program
5. Road Code update
6. Misc items
7. New Business/Citizen Concerns

Item 1: Welcome. Bill Frick opened the meeting about 7:05. There was no discussion of the March meeting summary and no comments had been provided prior to the meeting.

Item 5. Road Code update. Ben Stutz explained the Road Code process, how the Council's Transportation and Environment Committee had been discussing the proposed changes and that after adoption there would be a year long process to develop new roadway design standards.

The PSAC editorial to the Gazette as well as other contributions to the discussions were noted.

Item 2: Future education and enforcement efforts. Delegate Bronrott explained how the public information officers at various agencies, including the Public Information Office, Police, Department of Public Works and Transportation, and the public schools, met recently for the second time, to discuss how to promote pedestrian safety messages. The annual Street Smart campaign ran from March 18 to April 14. Honda supported the event and provided a speaker at the kick off in DC. They've also recently donated 400 copies of a pedestrian safety DVD aimed at 5-9 year old kids. These will be distributed to public and private elementary schools and county libraries.

Delegate Bronrott talked about speaking at the April Montgomery County Council of PTAs' Delegates' Assembly (monthly meetings of all PTAs during the school year) about pedestrian safety.

Item 4: Automated Speed Enforcement Program. Lt. Smith talked about the Automated Speed Enforcement Program, including the large numbers of warnings during the trial period and now

of citations being issued. He also mentioned some drivers being clocked at 70 mph in zones signed for 35 mph or less. The first \$25,000 in net revenue from the Automated Speed Enforcement Program will be going to help speed up the implementation of engineering improvements near schools.

Item 6: Miscellaneous. Matt noted some weaknesses with current snow removal practices and how he had received complaints from the public about county-owned, school-owned, and Parks Department-owned sidewalks and paths not being cleared. Richard Hoyer noted the issue of sidewalk maintenance year-round – poor quality, especially for ADA requirements at driveway ramps and vegetation blocking pathways. There was some discussion of how walking becomes an unreliable mode choice because of snow and poor maintenance and how this might affect transit access as well. Members indicated that this was an issue worth pursuing.

Matt briefly described the Pace Car program being developed in DC. This is a program where people make a pledge to drive the speed limit – in effect becoming “pace cars” for their neighborhoods. All liked the idea, but no commitment was made to pursuing it at this time.

Blanca talked about a recent hit and run of a Hispanic day laborer and the idea of holding a vigil for pedestrians who were struck and killed by vehicles. This idea will be investigated further by staff.

Item 7: New Business/Citizen Concerns. Mr. Trebach and Mr. Schwarzbart asked about slowing down traffic in the Friendship Heights area and on Willard Avenue specifically. They noted that “stop for pedestrians in crosswalk” paddle signs seem to be effective, but that they’ve had a hard time getting signs installed on Willard. Fred Lees, DPWT, explained that these signs are not installed at intersections with refuge islands in the median, so they were placed at a mid-block location.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30.